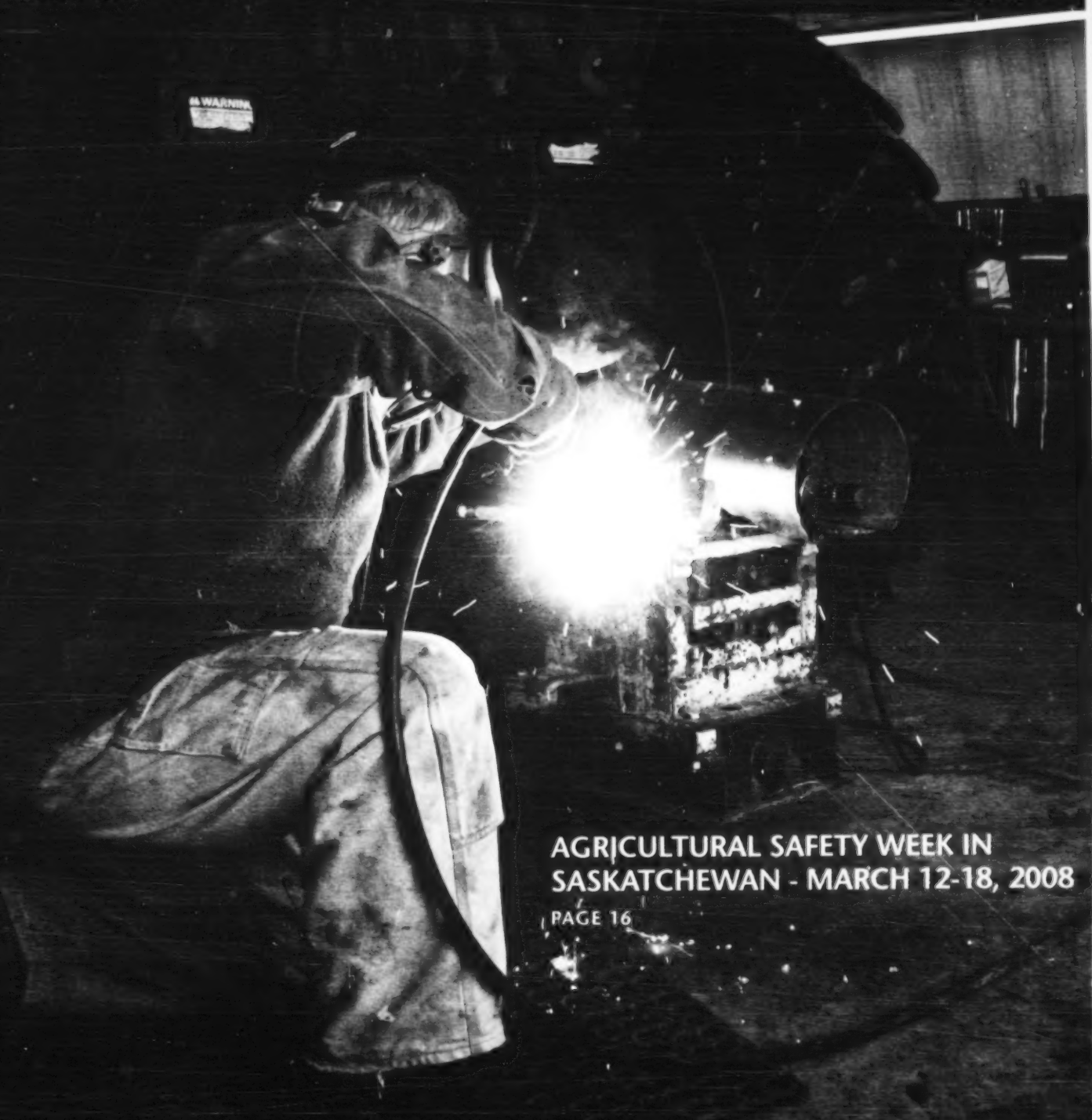
ISSUE 02

AGRIVIEW

MARCH 2008 VOLUME 4



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2008 CROP INSURANCE PROGRAM PAGE 12

Minister's Message

Welcome to the March edition of Agriview.

We have turned a corner in Saskatchewan. We are no longer a "have-not" province. People are returning home to work and live in Saskatchewan. New residents are finding opportunities in our province, in many cases in rural areas. Saskatchewan is growing and we are planning for the future and for future generations. We are fulfilling our election commitments and agriculture remains a key priority.

We tried to work quickly to help beef and hog producers deal with the economic pressures they are currently facing by introducing the Saskatchewan Short Term Hog and Cattle Loan programs. In addition, we signed onto the AgriInvest and AgriStability programs. We have also significantly improved our relationship with the federal government, which will benefit agriculture producers in this province.

Crop insurance is a vital tool to help producers manage their production risks. By the time you read this, the 2008 crop insurance program will have been announced. We will be reviewing all aspects of the crop insurance program this year with a goal of increasing coverage, while offering affordable premiums for the 2009 program.

The education portion of property tax has been a contentious issue for many years. This government remains committed to doubling tax rebates for the education portion of property taxes over the next four years.

Roads and rural transportation infrastructure are essential to rural residents and businesses. We will invest $1.8 billion over the next four years to improve our highways and the rest of the transportation infrastructure. We will dedicate the provincial fuel tax – in its entirety – to the rebuilding of the province's highways. In addition, we will negotiate an increase in federal funding for roads, highways and other infrastructure to push the investment beyond the $1.8 billion level.

Scientific research and development is crucial to the future of agriculture in Saskatchewan, and around the world. On February 4, 2008, I awarded more than $8 million in funding for 58 R&D projects through the Agriculture Development Fund. This government recognizes innovation is vital to the success of this industry.

Our grains and oilseeds sector is seeing a remarkable turn around from the past few years. Despite a high dollar and increased input costs, grain farm income is still projected to increase in 2008. At the same time, we recognize the current struggles of our cattle and hog producers, and are committed to working with producers, stakeholders and our federal counterparts, through this difficult downturn.

Agriculture has historically been the backbone of our provincial economy. This government believes this rich and varied industry will continue to play a vital role in our growing economy.

Saskatchewan is a new leader in Canada, and we will play an important role in the new West and the future of agriculture.

Sincerely,

Bob Bjornerud

Honourable Bob Bjornerud

Minister of Agriculture

SASKATCHEWAN YOUNG AG-ENTREPRENEURS

by Daphne Gottselig, AAg
Intern Agrologist
Agriculture Knowledge Centre

The Saskatchewan Young Ag-Entrepreneurs (SYA) is a new group comprising young farmers and agriculture entrepreneurs between the ages of 18-40. Established in 2006, the SYA is a non-profit organization designed to unite young people involved in agriculture production and agri-business. The SYA is the provincial branch of the Canadian Young Farmers Forum (CYFF), and participates at both provincial and national levels, providing networking opportunities in which to share ideas, discuss issues, and engage in educational learning experiences.

The SYA was busy in 2007. The 2007 Yes! to Agriculture Conference held in Saskatoon provided an excellent opportunity to get young people excited about agriculture. Attendees participated in two workshops offered through Farm Credit Canada, farm financial management discussions, and presentations from successful agri-businesses in Saskatchewan. Other activities included a BBQ and golf event. SYA's presence at Agribition last November attracted 56 new members to the organization.

Saskatchewan Young Ag-Entrepreneurs

The 2008 Yes! to Agriculture Conference and Annual General Meeting will take place on March 13 and 14 at the Temple Gardens Mineral Spa in Moose Jaw. While the agenda is still being finalized, it will include presentations from farm financial companies and organizations. In addition, presentations from young entrepreneurs who are making a difference in the agriculture industry, as well as a panel discussion, will be important aspects of the agenda.

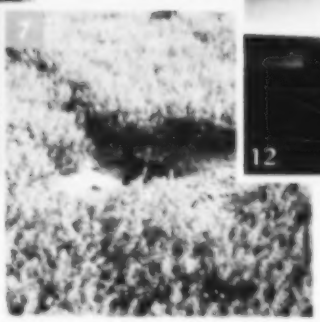
FOR MORE INFORMATION

- **Contact** sya@saskyoungag.ca;
- **Visit our website at** www.saskyoungag.ca; **or**
- **Contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.**

2008-06073/

STORY SNAPSHOTS

Crop seed health for 2008



Management of Richardson's Ground Squirrel

2008 Crop Insurance Program announced

Irrigation Crop Varieties

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Cover: Ken Etter of Richardson, Saskatchewan welding safely.

Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture

AGRIVIEW is published by the Communications Branch of Saskatchewan Agriculture for Saskatchewan farmers and farm and food organizations. **For more information, call 306-787-5160 or e-mail agriview@agr.gov.sk.ca.**
To view this publication online, visit www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca/programs - services.

Formulating forage seed mixtures

by André Bonneau, PAg
Forage Conversion Specialist
Agriculture Knowledge Centre

Commercial seed blends

In Canada, forage seed must be sold by weight. Therefore, a 25 kg bag of 50:50 blend of alfalfa and meadow brome contains 12.5 kg of alfalfa and 12.5 kg of meadow brome seed. It's important to realize that one kilogram of alfalfa has 440,000 seeds, while one kilogram of meadow brome has 176,000 seeds. The actual seed blend is closer to 70 per cent alfalfa and 30 per cent meadow brome.

Seed size and density

Forage seed sizes vary immensely, and this needs to be considered in a seed formulation, especially when there's a large range in seed sizes in the blend. For a comparative seed size chart, see the "Saskatchewan Forage Crop Production Guide" on the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture website.

The calculation

1. Determine the seeding rate based on seeds/ft.^{2} (or seeds/m^2). Refer to the "Saskatchewan Forage Crop Production Guide" or call the Agriculture Knowledge Centre for information on seeding rates.
2. Determine the ratio of each species and convert to seeds/ft.^{2} (or seeds/m^2).
3. Multiply the number of seeds/ft.^{2} by 43,560 ft.^{2}/ac. (seeds/m^2 x 10,000 m^2/ha.) to determine number of seeds/ac. (seeds/ha.).
4. Divide the number of seeds/ac. (or ha.) by the number of seeds in a pound (or kg) to determine seed weight required on one unit of land. This information is available in the Forage Crop Production Guide.
5. Repeat for each seed species to determine the desired seed ratio.

Conclusion

Many seed suppliers can offer custom blending services. By calculating a proper seed mixture, producers can ensure the seed mixture reflects their seeding intentions and avoid surprises after emergence.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377; or
- Visit the Saskatchewan Agriculture website at

FERTILIZER DECISIONS FOR SPRING 2008

by Richard Wharton, PAg
Production Economic Specialist

and

David Larsen, PAg
Soil/Nutrient Management Specialist
Agriculture Knowledge Centre

High fertilizer prices and high crop prices increase the importance of proper fertility. Managers need to balance potential value from yield gains against the cost and risk of additional fertilizer.

It is natural to consider cutting back on inputs when nitrogen jumps to over $0.60 per pound. Be aware, though, that saving $20 on inputs could mean a 10 bushel per acre loss in yield which, depending on the crop, could result in a significant reduction in revenue and net returns. The following table provides an example of possible cost and return comparing the years 1999 and 2008. The cost of fertilizer has risen, but the value of the crop has kept pace, so potential returns from good fertility are greater now than they were in 1999. These prices and responses are used for illustration purposes only, and are not actual recommendations.

Example: Nitrogen benefit 1999 vs. 2008

Year	Actual N $ per pound	Additional pounds N	Cost of N per acre	$Value of 10 bushels	Possible net gain
1999	.32	30	9.60	40	30.40
2008	.55	30	16.50	80	63.50

On the other hand, if you start out with dry soil conditions and don't receive adequate growing season moisture, reduced inputs could minimize your losses. Your attitude to risk and your financial ability to handle this risk are two key factors in the decision. Only nitrogen was used in this table, but, in practice, all aspects of the cropping system need to be considered.

Meeting your maximum economic yield requires establishing realistic yield targets based on previous experience and available spring soil moisture. This is done in conjunction with a soil test to measure available soil nutrients. Safely and efficiently applying the fertilizer recommended to meet your yield target will help you meet your maximum economic yield.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377; or
- Refer to the publication "Fertilizer Economics" on the Saskatchewan Agriculture website at www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca.

Late winter cattle watering issues

by R.G. (Bob) Klemmer
Beef-Forage Specialist
Livestock Development Branch

Late winter cattle watering issues can be grouped into three categories: water supply; water quality; and cattle safety. These issues are of concern due to the effect they can have on profitability, whether through added costs, production losses, or animal losses. Poor water supply often stems from inadequate spring re-charge and drought conditions. Ice thickness can amplify the problem of an already low water supply.

If you haven't already done so, develop a "Plan B" that addresses low water supply. In the case of abundant fresh snow cover, one option may be allowing the cattle to graze snow for their water needs. This alternative must involve careful assessment of the snow supply, and quality (not icy, or hard packed), and may require sorting the herd to remove any weak or poor body condition animals. Another alternative may involve use of an existing well or nearby dugout/pond. In extreme conditions, you may not have any alternative but to haul water temporarily from a municipal supply.

Depletion of oxygen levels in dugouts and ponds because of ice thickness and deep snow-pack can lead to poor water quality in late winter. Anaerobic conditions in the dugout or pond set the stage for anaerobic decomposition of both plant source and animal source organic matter. Anaerobic decomposition produces several nasty tasting and smelling organic acids like butyric acid, and gasses such as hydrogen sulphide (rotten egg smell) and ammonia (pungent smell). The real issue (based on research results) is that the odour and taste will affect cattle water intakes, which in turn affects feed intake. This can affect calving, lactation and conception rates. While this problem can be effectively prevented with a properly planned aeration system, when it happens, an alternate water source may be necessary.

Dangerous ice conditions in late winter can result in devastating cattle losses due to drowning. The most effective methods to prevent losses are total exclusion with off-site watering, or restricted animal access to dugouts and ponds. Never water cattle on a river where moving water affects ice thickness. If you must water directly from a dugout or pond, keep a close eye on ice conditions, and check your cattle regularly. With adequate planning, starting now, these animal losses can be prevented.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact Bob Klemmer, Beef-Forage Specialist, Livestock Development Branch at 1-306-848-2310;
- Call the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377; or
- Visit the Saskatchewan Agriculture website at

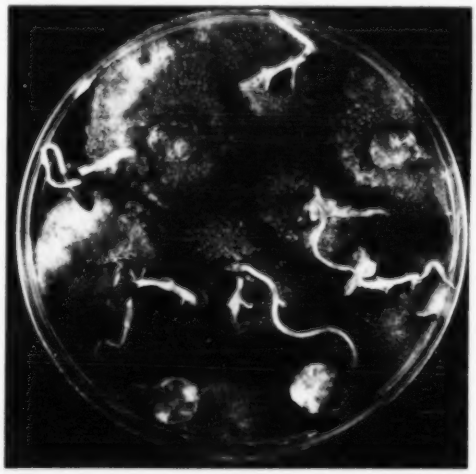
CROP SEED HEALTH FOR 2008

by Penny Pearse
Provincial Plant Disease Specialist
Crop Development Branch

Seed availability, price and quality are common topics of discussion among farmers attending winter meetings throughout the province. Many are asking the question, "what is the quality of seed heading into the 2008 growing season?"

The 2007 season was one of variability. Most crops developed little disease and were early maturing, resulting in few seed health concerns. However, some crops were exposed to wet conditions, were harvested later, and may have been exposed to disease. It's recommended that you have your seed tested for seed-borne diseases and germination, in order to determine what problems you might be planting into the soil this spring.

To date, reports from commercial seed testing laboratories across the province indicate that seed-borne diseases should not be a concern in 2008. Lab results are compiled annually and submitted to the Canadian Plant Disease Survey (available online at: http://www.cps-scpv.ca/cpds.htm).



Petri dish showing a high level of seed-borne ascochyta infection in lentil (photo by Saskatchewan Agriculture).

Pea seed from the 2007 season had a provincial average of 1.5 per cent seed-borne ascochyta infection, and 39 per cent of samples were disease-free. Chickpea seed had a provincial average of 0.8 per cent seed-borne ascochyta infection, and 48 per cent of samples were disease-free. Lentil seed had an average of 0.2 per cent seed-borne ascochyta infection, and 89 per cent of samples were disease-free. There were only negligible levels of seed-borne anthracnose found in lentil samples. Germination for pulse crops was also considered good. The only exception may be field pea, if it was taken off too dry and was subject to mechanical damage.

There's also good news for cereals. Cereal crop samples had an average of 0.5 per cent seed-borne infection caused by Fusarium graminearum and 3.6 per cent total Fusarium species.

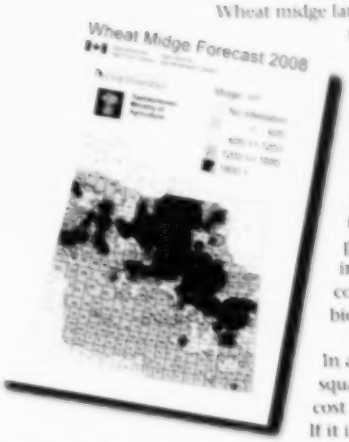
Remember that these provincial values are only averages, and can disguise a wide range in seed-borne infection. Therefore, it is important to have your seed tested if you are unsure about seed quality. Using a seed treatment can help protect seed quality and prevent seed rots and blights caused by soil-borne diseases.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.

Saskatchewan 2008 Wheat Midge forecast

by Scott Hartley
Insect Control Specialist
Crop Development Branch



Wheat midge populations have made a dramatic increase in Saskatchewan. As depicted in the 2008 Wheat Midge Forecast Map, the potential of high risk for wheat midge includes much of the wheat growing area throughout the moist dark brown, black and gray soil zones in 2008. Actual populations in 2008 will vary from field to field, and areas of infestation indicated on the forecast map of over 600 wheat midge per square metre may still result in significant damage and yield loss if climatic conditions are favourable.

In all areas where wheat midge is present, growers are urged to monitor wheat fields during the susceptible period when the wheat head becomes visible as the boot splits until mid-flowering (anthesis). Regular field scouting on multiple nights in succession is important in understanding the population changes in a particular field. This information is important in making a sound decision with respect to the necessity and timing of control.

Wheat midge larvae feed on developing wheat kernels and can affect the final yield, grade and grain quality. Severely damaged kernels that do not develop or are lost during threshing will result in a lower yield. Moderately damaged kernels that are harvested will reduce grade. It is recommended that an insecticide application be made to protect crop yield when the crop is heading and adult midge density is one midge per four to five heads. To maintain optimum grade, insecticide should be used when adult midge population reaches one per eight to 10 heads. Late insecticide applications should be avoided, as it is not cost effective and may adversely affect the parasitic biological control agents.

In areas indicating levels greater than 1,200 midge per square metre, wheat producers are advised to include the cost of insecticide application as part of their 2008 budget. If it is an option in a current rotation, a non-susceptible cereal crop (e.g. oats, barley) or a broadleaf crop (e.g. canola, pulse crops) is a management option to avoid wheat midge damage.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact Scott Hartley, Insect Control Specialist, Crop Development Branch, at (306) 787-4669 or e-mail shartley@agr.gov.sk.ca.

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF SUNFLOWER VARIETY TESTING

by Elaine Moats
Crop Development Specialist
Crop Development Branch

The Saskatchewan Sunflower Committee will celebrate its 25th anniversary of sunflower variety testing this year.

Cliff Powlowski, oilseeds technician with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada in Saskatoon, has been the co-ordinator for the sunflower variety testing program for all of those years.

Photo credit: Carol Todd

The Saskatchewan Sunflower Committee was incorporated as a non-profit association in 1983. Membership in the committee is voluntary and is made up of producers, researchers, provincial Ministry of Agriculture personnel, and agriculture input industry representatives.

The role of the Saskatchewan Sunflower Committee is to promote sunflower production by testing varieties that are suitable for Saskatchewan growing conditions. The official Saskatchewan Sunflower Committee trials data are used to support variety registration.

The committee publishes an annual summary of their variety test results. The summaries are posted on the Saskatchewan Agriculture website at: www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca.

The results are also included in the "Varieties of Grain Crops for Saskatchewan" publication if the varieties are registered in Canada and are tested in the Saskatchewan Sunflower Committee trials.

The testing program has been co-ordinated by Powlowski at a minimal cost, while providing an important source of information for producers and industry. The trials are funded with fees paid by the companies submitting entries.

The sunflower industry has changed dramatically over the last 25 years. Originally, the majority of the sunflower acres were the linoleic-type grown for the cooking oil market. With the move to eliminate trans-fats, sunflower oil is gaining popularity as a healthy choice for the frying industry. Along with this change comes the development of mid-oleic or NuSun varieties, well adapted to the new market.

To Cliff and the members of the Saskatchewan Sunflower Committee, it is important to maintain the ability to test suitable varieties for the growth of the sunflower industry in Saskatchewan.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact Elaine Moats, Crop Development Specialist, at (306) 848-2856, or e-mail emoats@agr.gov.sk.ca; or
- Contact Cliff Powlowski with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada at Powlowski.C@agr.gc.ca.

HOT OFF THE PRESS

Saskatchewan Agriculture is constantly updating the wealth of information it makes available to Saskatchewan residents. You can download the most current version of any document posted on our website. You can also call the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377 to request a hard copy of many items. Below is a list of the latest documents posted, as well as the most frequently visited pages, on our website at: www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca.

Varieties of Grain Crops 2008 - Provides information on the relative yields for the different growing regions in the province, as well as production information on the crops, including a list of seed distributors. Visit: Production | Crops-Seeding.

Grasshopper Forecast - Grasshopper populations remain low for most of Saskatchewan as illustrated in the 2008 Grasshopper Forecast Map. Visit: Production | Crops-Insects.

Short-Term Hog Loan Program and Short-Term Cattle Loan Program Application Forms - Are you looking for application forms? Visit: Forms | Livestock Forms.

Organic Crop Planning Guides - Guides to estimate the income and cost for different crops in the various soil zones in the province using organic farming practices. Visit: Management | Financial Planning.

Cash Lease Agreement - Outlines some of the information and considerations of leasing privately owned land. Visit: Management | Business Arrangements.

Spring Land Tender Sale - Land for sale by tender in various Saskatchewan Rural Municipalities. Visit: Programs and Services | Crown Lands.

Management of Richardson's Ground Squirrel

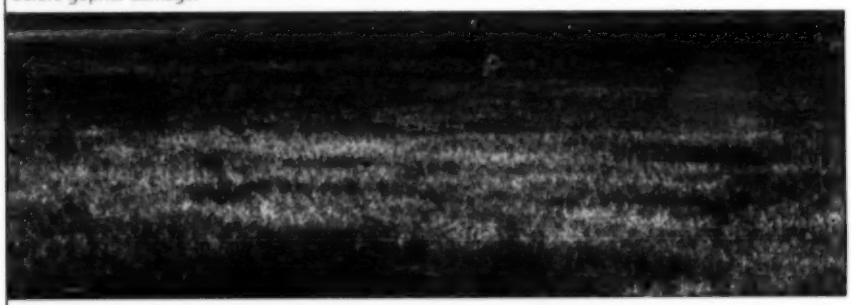
by Cameron Wilk
Acting Provincial Manager
Field Services

and

Scott Hartley
Provincial Specialist - Insect/Pest Management

The Richardson's ground squirrel, commonly known on the Canadian Prairies as the "gopher," has been a problem for many years, but has been of special concern to Saskatchewan producers for the past decade. Historically, this small rodent was considered to be a pest in pastures. However, significant damage to cropland has been noted in recent years, with drier areas in the southwest being particularly hard hit by ground squirrel damage.

Before gopher damage.

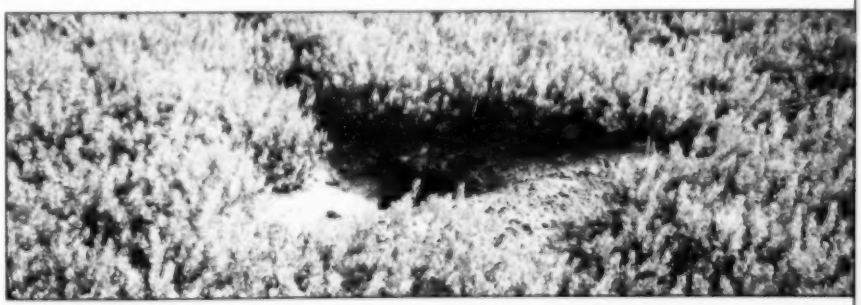


Control attempts have usually been through shooting and the use of various toxic baits. Although these may include chlorphacinone (Rozol) and Zinc Phosphide (Burrow Oat Bait), grain treated with strychnine has been the most preferred by producers. Strychnine baits have registrations as ready-to-use products (RTUs) in both dry and freshly mixed high moisture formulations. Strychnine was not available in a concentrated form for on-farm use after deregistration in the early 1990s until 2007, when an Emergency Registration was granted by the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA).

The return of the sale of the strychnine concentrate directly to agricultural producers has certainly generated a great deal of interest. As a condition of this approval, the PMRA expects the distribution of the concentrate to be limited to the worst affected areas. This area includes 57 Rural Municipalities (RMs) in the southwest. Supplies of strychnine are limited and barely keeping up with demand.

Aside from proper safe storage practices, the dry baits are intended to remain viable for an indefinite period. However, the freshly mixed baits have a limited shelf life and must be used prior to the best before date identified on the package. Fresh baits require cool storage or refrigeration to prevent mould and spoiling of the bait, which results in an unpalatable product that is ineffective for ground squirrel control. Timeliness is the most critical aspect of gopher management by chemical means. The best time to control the rodents is in the spring, as the ground squirrels emerge from over-wintering burrows in search of food. The first to come above ground are the males. In southern parts of the province, this is usually in March, although mild winters result in frequent reports of ground squirrels foraging in late February in the southwest, near Mankota.

Timeliness is the most critical aspect of gopher management by chemical means. The best time to control the rodents is in the spring.



After gopher damage.

Most of the food caches below ground are consumed by the male, and they appear more robust and well fed. A few weeks later, the females appear and are more gaunt and hungry. This factor makes the females a better target for baits; as well, controlling the reproductive females will have a more pronounced effect in reducing populations. Efficacy levels in response to any grain based baits can drop below 30 per cent after green growth appears in the spring.

Other control options have also been available, such as Exit™, a foam formulation that is injected into a burrow and expands to suffocate the ground squirrels present in the burrow. Exit has proven very successful in areas such as sports fields, but may be of limited use in large agricultural areas.

More recently, aluminum phosphide (Phostoxin™) has been registered for ground squirrel control. Phostoxin is a fumigant and has more commonly been used for control of insects in stored grain. It is important to note that this is a restricted use product and requires a special license for both purchase and application. Phostoxin is available in a solid pellet form and will not release the aluminum phosphide gas unless temperatures are above + 5 degrees and proper soil moisture conditions exist.

There are characteristics about fumigants that make these products uniquely different from other pesticides, which is why there are restrictions and licensing requirements. This product represents significant health risk to applicators. SIAST has developed a fumigation course specifically for farmers which includes information on using fumigants for both stored grain insect control and ground squirrel control. Successful completion of the course will enable the participant to be licensed to purchase and use phostoxin.

Although strychnine is the preferred rodenticide for Richardson's ground squirrel, further work is required to evaluate the effectiveness of the various toxins along with other management strategies.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.

Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture

Land for Sale by Tender or Permit

COMPLETED TENDERS AND 5% DEPOSIT MUST BE RECEIVED AT THE APPROPRIATE MINISTRY REGIONAL OFFICE, AS LISTED BELOW, BY 12:00 NOON MARCH 20, 2008

Additional tender forms and eligibility criteria may be obtained from Ministry of Agriculture/Regional Offices, Rural Municipality offices or on line at www.agr.gov.sk.ca.

Conditions of Tender

1. Tenders must clearly indicate the land being bid on and the amount for each parcel being bid. Tenders must be enclosed in a sealed envelope clearly marked "Land Tender" and mailed or delivered to the appropriate Regional Office.

2. Bidders must complete a declaration indicating their eligibility to purchase, including:
   - bidders must be 18 years or older;
   - control (own, lease or rent) land with a total taxable assessment not exceeding $320,000, unless otherwise specified;
   - spend the majority of their time farming;
   - derive the majority of their income from farming.

3. A deposit by certified cheque, money order or bank draft, payable to the Ministry of Agriculture for five per cent of the total tender, must accompany the tender to be considered.

4. In addition to the highest bid for any individual parcel, the Ministry of Agriculture will consider bids that provide the highest aggregate price for any combination of parcels.

5. The Ministry of Agriculture reserves the right to reject any bid. Where the highest bid is rejected, the bidder may be provided with an opportunity to meet the listed estimated market value.

6. An agreement for sale and transfer will be prepared in the name of the successful bidder. The spouse of the successful bidder can be added to the agreement for sale and transfer upon receipt of a written request.

7. The successful bidder has 30 days, from the effective date of the agreement for sale, to provide the balance in cash to complete the purchase. The deposit will be forfeited if the successful bidder does not finalize the agreement for sale.

8. Fees associated for registering the title with Information Services Corporation (ISC) are the responsibility of the purchaser and are in addition to the bid price.

9. All lands together with any fixtures and improvements are sold "as is." The bidder is solely responsible to determine the value and condition of land being sold, value and condition of improvements, land quality, land use, environmental condition and any other information pertaining to tendered land.

10. The Ministry of Agriculture may withhold or withdraw any land from sale at any time prior to the delivery of a signed agreement for sale.

11. Where the land is not sold, land may be listed on the Ministry catalogue sale until 5:00 p.m. April 18, 2008. Sale from the catalogue is on a "first-come, first-served basis" at the minimum value announced at the tender opening.

12. Where land is not sold by 5:00 p.m. on April 18, 2008, a short term permit on the land may be offered to the highest bidder at Crown rental plus GST and a $40 permit fee. If the permit is refused, the Ministry may offer it to others on a declining bid basis.

FOR LAND IN

SOUTH REGION
FOR RM 224:

MAIL OR DELIVER TENDERS TO:
SWIFT CURRENT REGIONAL OFFICE
BOX 5000
350 CHEADLE STREET W
SWIFT CURRENT SK S9H 4G3

FOR RM 42 and 126:
MAIL OR DELIVER TENDERS TO:
WEYBURN REGIONAL OFFICE
BOX 2003, 110 SOURIS AVENUE
CITY CENTRE MALL
WEYBURN SK S4H 2Z9

NORTH EAST REGION
FOR RM 214, 216, 218, 221, 223, 250, 273, 277, 301, 305, 334, 335, 338, 340, 394, 395, 426, and 488:

MAIL OR DELIVER TENDERS TO:
TISDALE REGIONAL OFFICE
BOX 1480
1105 - 99TH STREET
TISDALE SK S0E 1T0

NORTH WEST REGION
FOR RM 254, 261, 292, 317, 377, 380 and 435:

NORTH BATTLEFORD REGIONAL OFFICE
1192 - 102ND STREET
NORTH BATTLEFORD SK S9A 1E9

PUBLIC OPENING OF TENDER BIDS ON LANDS WILL BE HELD AT 1:30 P.M. MARCH 20TH, 2008 AT THE ABOVE LOCATIONS

R.M.	Land Description	Acres	Codes	Est Mkt
	VALERIE TOWNSEND-FRASER (306) 848-2378			
42	SW-33-05-27-2 *Second time on sale.*	160	C	$38,065
126	SE-19-15-10-2	160	F,G,CE,C	$36,460
126	NW-20-15-10-2	137	C,W	$37,480
126	SW-20-15-10-2	160	C,CE	$38,850

R.M.	Land Description	Acres	Codes	Est Mkt
	WALLY HOEHN (306) 363-6200			
184	NE-11-21-04-2	143	A,C,CE, FR,G	$21,000
214	*[NW-1-22-05-2 SW-1-22-05-2]	313	C,CE,FR	$81,600
216	SW-31-24-10-2	160	C,CE,FR,	$33,200
218	SE-24-24-18-2	150	F,G,H,W	$46,900

R.M.	Land Description	Acres	Codes	Est Mkt
221	SW-5-23-24-2	159	C,CE,FR	$30,300
221	SE-4-24-24-2	159	C,FR	$42,100
223	SE-29-22-02-3	156	C	$40,800
223	SW-29-22-02-3	159	C	$34,100
250	SE-10-27-23-2	160	C,G	$31,100
277	NW-28-29-13-2	160	C,CE,G	$37,400
277	NE-21-30-14-2	160	C,CE,FR	$37,600
338	SE-27-35-18-2	161	C,FR	$53,200
340	SE-2-34-24-2	158	C,CE,FR H	$29,800

BRENT MCINNIS
(306) 778-8295

224	*[NE-27-24-05-3 NW-27-24-05-3 SE-27-24-05-3 SW-27-24-05-3]	501	H,I,P	$335,000

No permit option on this parcel. Pivot included.

DEAN CORTUS
(306) 878-8880

273	SW-1-28-02-2	156	C,CE,FR	$35,900
301	SE-28-33-31-1	145	C,T	$41,600
301	SE-30-31-32-1	109	H	$16,000
305	NW-29-33-07-2	158	C	$35,500
334	NE-6-35-06-2	161	H	$36,900
334	SW-25-35-06-2	152	C	$53,900
335	SE-2-34-08-2	159	H	$31,300
335	SE-5-34-08-2	158	H,CE,FR	$41,000
335	SE-8-34-08-2	160	H	$36,300
394	SE-9-43-04-2	158	C	$46,700
395	SW-3-42-08-2	158	C,FR	$63,400
426	SW-12-45-10-2	148	C,H,FR	$47,400
426	NW-16-42-12-2	159	H	$28,000

R.M.	Land Description	Acres	Codes	Est Mkt

TIM FEIST
(306) 862-1789

488	SW-3-53-16-2	160	H	$36,700

GALEN LOY
(306) 446-7473

254	NE-29-28-04-3	160	C,CE	$34,800
292	NW-29-30-28-3	150	C,CE,FR	$60,100

2 assignable surface leases

292	SE-29-30-28-3	156	C,CE,FR	$55,400
292	SW-29-30-28-3	159	C,H,CE, FR	$51,500
292	*[NE-31-30-28-3 SE-31-30-28-3]	118	C	$41,800

Assignable surface lease

377	*[NE-21-38-13-3 NW-21-38-13-3]	321	G,F	$44,500
380	SE-5-38-22-3	80	C,CE,FR	$11,800
435	NE-11-45-10-3	155	G,F W,CE	$19,000

TRACEY CHARABIN
(306) 446-7685

261	NE-33-27-25-3	161	C,FR	$34,700
261	NW-33-27-25-3	161	C,FR	$33,900
317	SW-9-33-13-3	35	H	$7,000

Sale subject to subdivision.

TIM SCHULTZ
(306) 446-7466

261	NW-29-27-27-3	158	C,CE	$35,900
261	SW-29-27-27-3	160	C,CE	$37,800

CODES: A - Access Limitation, B - Buildings, C - Cultivation, CE - Conservation Easement, F - Fencing, FR - Farm Size Restriction removed, G - Grazing, GS - Grain Storage, H - Hay, I - Irrigation, LA - Living Accommodation, LF - Livestock Facilities, LZ - Local Zoning, P - Power, S - CP/Survey Correction, T - Timber Included In Valuation, W - Water, Y - Yardsite. *Denotes - "to be sold as a unit"

Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture

TENDER TO PURCHASE PROVINCIAL LAND

Name in full (no initials)_____

_____

(Complete mailing address including postal code) (Phone)

Tender

I hereby submit a tender on the following land:

RM #	Tender Quarter Section or Advertised Unit	Tender
____	_____	$ _____
____	_____	$ _____
____	_____	$ _____
____	_____	$ _____

Deposit

Enclosed is a certified cheque, money order or bank draft for $_____ representing a deposit of five per cent (5%) of my total tender.

My G.S.T. Registration Number is _____

(**Individuals who do not have** a G.S.T. Registration Number will be required to pay **G.S.T.** on the purchase)

I hereby submit the above tender to purchase provincial land, **subject to the conditions listed in the tender ad, which I have read and understood.**

_____ _____

(Date) (Signature)

Eligibility Declaration

I, _____ of _____ do hereby declare I am at least 18 years of age; I spend or will spend a majority of my time on farming operations; that I derive or will derive a majority of my income from farming operations; and that the accrued taxable assessment of the land that I own, lease or rent is $ _____. If this total taxable assessment is greater than $320,000, I understand that I am not eligible to bid on lands, which are listed in the tender ad. I understand this declaration is given for the purpose of obtaining a disposition of Provincial lands and I accept that any disposition obtained pursuant to this declaration may be cancelled if I have secured the same by misrepresentation or non disclosure of any material fact.

_____ _____

(Date) (Signature)

A NEW WAY OF THINKING WITH THE CANADIAN AGRICULTURAL SKILLS SERVICE

"We're enjoying farming again," says Debbie Beare.

Rod and Debbie Beare raise 150 head of Maine Anjou cattle near Fillmore, SK. Both have participated in the Canadian Agricultural Skills Service (CASS), delivered by Saskatchewan Agriculture and funded in partnership with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

When Debbie first heard about CASS, she wasn't sure whether the program really applied to them. She sent away for an information package to learn more. "The package was great," she says, "in that it outlined all we needed to know to get started." To be eligible, participants must be an established or beginning farmer with annual gross sales of at least $10,000 and a family net income averaging less than $45,000. They must also have been out of high school for two years or more and not be receiving (Part 2) Employment Insurance benefits for training.

The CASS program supports training for improving farm production or business management skills, for gaining new employment, or for expanding a business venture. Participants work with counsellors to identify strengths and set goals, then develop a personalized learning plan. "I especially liked that we could tailor the program to what we needed," Debbie states. CASS also provides funding toward tuition, textbooks, and expenses such as travel and dependent care.

"The hardest part about this was changing our thinking," Debbie says. "We worried that by pursuing training, we were choosing between farming or doing something else. Instead, training has empowered us to keep on farming—while making a contribution to our bottom line and getting more involved in our community."

Debbie completed the Continuing Care Aide program this past summer, and is in high demand from three different facilities in the area. Rod took his Class 1A truck driving training and is currently hauling grain and fertilizer for a local firm. "He can't believe how much better he feels now," Debbie says. "His training was for something that will benefit our operation in the long run. And he really likes working with other producers."

"Farming is so difficult these days that you end up second-guessing a lot of the decisions you make," she says. "I think CASS is trying to help develop healthier farms—and healthier farmers. It helped us to see there are different ways to achieve what we want."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- To find out more about CASS, visit www.agr.gc.ca/cass or call toll-free 1-866-452-5558.

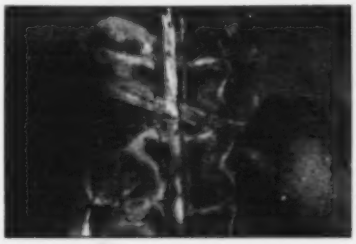
Canada-Saskatchewan Specified Risk Material Management Program

by Lee Giroux
Manager of Grant and Rebate Programs
Financial Programs Branch

On June 26, 2006, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) announced enhancements to Canada's feed ban in an attempt to strengthen Canada's safeguards against the spread of BSE and to speed its eradication.

The new regulations required all Specified Risk Material (SRM) tissues to be removed and excluded from use in all animal feed, pet food and fertilizer and disposed of in a manner approved by the CFIA by July 12, 2008.

Canada and Saskatchewan have made funding available for investment in one-time infrastructure development projects specifically related to SRM handling and disposal. The goal is to create feasible short and long term environmentally safe SRM disposal options across Saskatchewan to reduce the cost of industry adaptation to the new CFIA regulation.



The spine is an example of specified risk material that is removed.

Funding levels are as follows:

Up to 50 per cent of eligible project expenditures to a maximum of:

- $100,000 - Health Licensed Plants;
- $1 million - Domestically Inspected Plants;
- $3 million - Federally Inspected Plants;
- $1 million - CFIA approved SRM disposal facilities.

A final prorated payment of up to an additional 40 per cent of eligible project costs may be issued if eligible payments are less than total program funds available.

Program assistance is available for new, or modifications to existing, infrastructure for a CFIA approved SRM disposal facility or a licensed packing plant to meet the requirements of the new feed ban regulations.

Projects that could be eligible include: modifications to beef slaughter and processing facilities to accommodate SRM segregation, storage or disposal; landfills; composting; rendering; incineration; gasification; alkaline/thermal hydrolysis; bio-digestion; and other projects that create value from SRM, such as energy generation.

Eligible expenditures include those made on approved projects between December 14, 2004 and March 31, 2009. The deadline for application to the program is December 31, 2008.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Visit the Saskatchewan Agriculture website at www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca; or
- Call our toll free line at 1-877-874-5365.

MEAT PROCESSING INVESTMENT REBATE PROGRAM

by Lee Giroux
Manager of Grant and Rebate Programs
Financial Programs

The Government of Saskatchewan is committed to growing the livestock slaughter and meat processing capacity in the province and processing more of our livestock here in Saskatchewan in terms of slaughter, primary and secondary processing.

The Meat Processing Investment Rebate program offers a 15 per cent rebate on construction costs for new plant construction or a move from provincially regulated or health inspected status (can include expansion) to federally registered status, or federally registered status to European Union (EU) status.

In the case of expansion of federal establishments, a minimum 25 per cent increase in capacity measured by an increase in cooler capacity (slaughter and primary) or raw meat processed (secondary) must be added to qualify for the program.

The program application deadline of March 31, 2008 is approaching quickly. Applicants are encouraged to apply at the time of project initiation to register the project with the program and to gain a full understanding of program terms and conditions. Applicants are required to submit their feasibility study and a comprehensive business plan which supports their initiative.

Applicants must have incurred all eligible expenditures, and the project must be complete no later than March 31, 2010.

Eligible expenditures are based on selected expenditures that will be capitalized during the start-up period in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles in Canada such as building materials and construction costs, slaughter and processing equipment, infrastructure development (water, power, energy, sewer, waste treatment), site excavation, construction labour costs, project management salaries from project commencement (limited based on type of construction) and professional services (accountant, lawyers, engineers and architects).

In recognition that there was a need to free up additional dollars to help encourage meat processing, the government has also changed the program payment schedule to include multiple interim payments. This allows processors the ability to use program dollars as a means of securing bridge financing until they become operational.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Visit the Saskatchewan Agriculture website at www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca; or
- Call our toll free line at 1-877-874-5365

Photo credit: Greg Becker

2008 Crop Insurance program announced

by Trilby Henderson
Communications and Information Specialist
Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation

Now that the 2008 Crop Insurance program has been announced, Saskatchewan producers are encouraged to begin making their insurance selections for the upcoming crop year.

Crop Insurance is introducing some new program features this year, including a new Enhanced Irrigation Pilot to better recognize the unique risks associated with irrigated crop production, and alfalfa seed yield-loss insurance based on individual experience with alfalfa seed production to better reflect the individual production average on the customer's farm.

Several key programs have also been continued for 2008, including the Contract and Variable Price Options which provide customers with the opportunity to receive a better insured price, and the Crop Averaging Program which allows customers increased coverage by "basketing" their crops. The Gopher Damage Feature has become a permanent part of the multi-peril program, meaning gophers will continue to be included as an insurable cause of loss under the establishment and yield-loss components.

As a Crop Insurance customer, you can expect to receive your 2008 information package in the mail soon. These packages contain all the information required to make your 2008 insurance decisions, including all insurance selection forms, and a copy of the new "Complete Guide to Understanding Crop Insurance."

This year, Crop Insurance has combined all the program information found in our previous brochures into a single, easy-to-read guide designed to help you navigate the crop insurance program throughout the year. The guide also includes additional information applicable to the program, such as copies of the 2008 terms and conditions, crop codes and maps, and examples of how to fulfill your obligations as a contract holder, like completing your Seeded Acreage Report or reviewing your Statement of Insurance.

Detailed program information is also available at www.saskcropinsurance.com. The Crop Insurance website provides access to a number of online tools to help you plan your farm management strategy in the year ahead, including: "what if" coverage cost calculators; current and historical claim statistics for our multi-peril and weather-based programs; insurable crop and weather station maps; a calendar listing all 2008 deadlines; downloadable Crop Insurance forms; and much more.

Customers are reminded that the deadline to apply for, reinstate, cancel or make changes to your 2008 contract of insurance is March 31. Your contract is continuous, and the selections you made in 2007 will remain the same for 2008 unless you make changes.

If you have outstanding 2007 premiums, please contact your local customer service office before March 31 to discuss the payment options available to you. Any contract with outstanding premiums will not be eligible for continued coverage if the amount owing is not paid by the sales deadline.

If you are enrolling in Crop Insurance for the first time, you are encouraged to contact your local customer service office as soon as possible to make an appointment. New applicants must apply for a contract of insurance in person. Current customers who have questions about the program or would like assistance in making changes to their contract are also welcome to set up an appointment with staff.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact Crop Insurance toll-free at 1-888-935-0000.

LEARN MORE ABOUT AGRIINVEST AND AGRISTABILITY

AgriInvest and AgriStability Information Sessions

These sessions will explore the new suite of business risk management programs.

Topics include:

- how the new programs can work for you;
- tips on how to complete the 2007 Harmonized form.

All session times are from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

- **March 3, 2008**
  - Humboldt – Bella Vista Inn
  - Raymore – Elks Hall
- **March 5, 2008**
  - Saskatoon – Ramada Inn
- **March 6, 2008**
  - Moose Jaw – Heritage Inn
- **March 18, 2008**
  - Shaunavon – Legion Hall
  - Maple Creek – Legion Hall
- **March 19, 2008**
  - Assiniboia – Prince of Wales Complex
  - Swift Current – Days Inn

Arrange your AgriInvest and AgriStability Individual Producer Appointment.

Our program representatives are available to meet individually with producers.

To register for an individual meeting, contact AAFC at 1-866-367-8506.

All appointments are held between 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

- **March 3 and 4, 2008**
  - Humboldt – Court House
  - Raymore – Crop Insurance Customer Service Office
- **March 5 and 6, 2008**
  - Saskatoon – Saskatchewan Agriculture Regional Office
  - Moose Jaw – Crop Insurance Customer Service Office
- **March 17 and 18, 2008**
  - Maple Creek – Saskatchewan Environment Building
  - Shaunavon – Crop Insurance Customer Service Office
- **March 19 and 20**
  - Swift Current – Saskatchewan Agriculture Regional Office
  - Assiniboia – Crop Insurance Customer Service Office

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Call 1-866-367-8506 or visit www.agr.gc.ca/agriinvest or www.agr.gc.ca/agristability

$8 million granted to research projects through Agriculture Development Fund

On February 4th, Agriculture Minister Bob Bjornerud announced $8.23 million in funding to support 58 agricultural research and development projects in the province, through Saskatchewan Agriculture's Agriculture Development Fund (ADF).

Agriculture Minister Bob Bjornerud at the February 4th announcement

The current round of ADF funding provides support for research projects undertaken by organizations such as Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the National Research Council, the Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute, University of Saskatchewan, the University of Regina, the Prairie Swine Centre and the Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO).

Projects include the development of improved breeding technology for canaryseed, improved disease resistance and DNA marker development, agronomic programs for newly released potato varieties, the development of high oleic flax with enhanced oil concentration, and genomics research aimed at understanding cattle's appetite.

ADF provides funding for institutions, companies and industry organizations to carry out research, development and value-added activities in the agriculture and agri-food sector, resulting in new knowledge, information and choices in technologies, techniques and varieties for farmers, processors, and input suppliers.

Saskatchewan Agriculture and the ADF Advisory Committee have defined a number of outcomes that ADF projects should aim to achieve, including:

- improved food quality and safety;
- new and innovative food and other bioproducts and bioprocessing technologies;
- decreased agricultural production risks; increased livestock development; optimized feeding systems;
- new and improved crop varieties meeting market demand and consumer preferences, diversifying into high value crops;
- integrated and comprehensive farming systems and practices that enhance and maintain the agro-ecosystem's capacity and the integrity of the provincial land and soil resources; and proprietary technology and know-how in novel applications.

The Agriculture Development Fund is just one of several programs that provide funding for agriculture research and development in Saskatchewan. Each year, the Ministry commits $13.6 million to a number of development areas, including support for research and development institutions, creation and retention of intellectual capacity (Strategic Research Program chairs), funding for innovative ideas, and support for commercialization of technologies.

All ADF 2007-08 approved projects are listed and described on Saskatchewan Agriculture's website at www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca under "Research."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact the Agriculture Research Branch in Regina at (306) 787-6566.

STUDY CONFIRMS EFFICIENCY OF FERTILIZING WITH MANURE

Swine and cattle manure are effective sources of fertilization, according to a two-year study conducted by University of Saskatchewan researchers with funding from the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture's Agriculture Development Fund (ADF).

Jeff Schoenau, Saskatchewan Agriculture's Research Chair in Nutrient Management and a professor at the university's Soil Science Department, was the principal investigator for this study.

"In this project, we took a look at what happens when manure is added at agronomic and excessive rates, in terms of how that impacts soil nutrient loading and crop growth," Schoenau says. "The other thing we did is to see if there were some strategies that would be useful in increasing the crop recovery of the applied manure nutrient."

The study was conducted with swine manure at three sites and cattle manure at a fourth site. It was assisted by the Prairie Agriculture Machinery Institute (PAMI), which used injection technology to provide the manure applications in all cases. There were some variations in the approaches to the tests.

The study showed the potential new cost benefits – given the current price of commercial fertilizer – of applying manure as a primary fertilization source.

The researchers tried to determine the optimum rate, sequence, and method of application for manure that would maximize crop recovery and minimize nutrient loading issues. The results indicated that swine manure was superior to cattle manure, in that cattle manure required a bit more management.

They got a very good crop response out of swine manure when applied at rates around 80 to 100 pounds of nitrogen per acre per year. With cattle manure, which is quite high in phosphorous relative to nitrogen content, there were issues with phosphorus loading that were alleviated to a certain extent by adding some commercial fertilizer nitrogen.

According to the study results, in order to maximize the recovery of crop manure nutrients, the most important aspects are the rate of application, the method of application and incorporation (injection gives a better recovery of the nitrogen than broadcast), and the sequence of application (higher rates every second year also seemed to work quite well).

Schoenau notes that it is important to monitor all the nutrients for balance. Then, if something is missing, you can supplement with commercial fertilizer.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact Jeff Schoenau, Senior Researcher, Soil Science Department, University of Saskatchewan, (306) 966-6844 or
- A copy of the ADF project Maximizing Long-Term Benefits from Swine Manure Nutrients Applied to Saskatchewan Soils, #20040375, is available on the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture website at [illegible]

Plan your irrigation schedule early for better crop results

by Sarah Sommerfeld, AAg
Provincial Irrigation Specialist
Irrigation Development Branch

The purpose of irrigation scheduling is to monitor soil-moisture content to effectively and efficiently apply the required amount of irrigation to meet crop requirements and optimize production.

The first step in the irrigation scheduling management process is to determine the soil texture. Soil texture affects the infiltration rate, or how quickly water is able to move through the soil, and the soil's moisture holding capacity.

Coarse textured soils, such as sand, have higher infiltration rates and lower moisture holding capacities in comparison to fine textured soils, such as loam and clay.

The infiltration rate and moisture holding capacity dictate the volume of irrigation that can be applied, and that volume impacts the rotation speed or set timing of irrigation systems.

The amount of soil water that is available for crop use and critical for crop development is the difference between field capacity and wilting point. Field capacity is the amount of water remaining within the soil two or three days after the soil has been saturated and free drainage has nearly ceased. Soil wilting point is determined when a crop can no longer utilize the soil water, as it is unavailable for plant use and bound to soil particles.

Irrigation applications need to be scheduled to maintain sufficient moisture levels in the soil moisture reservoir. An irrigator must know how much water a crop will use throughout a growing season to determine how quickly the soil moisture reservoir will become depleted.

Different types of crops, whether oilseeds, cereals, pulses or forages, require varying amounts of moisture at specific development stages. In general terms, an annual crop has the highest moisture demand from flowering to seed formation. Daily moisture requirements substantially increase when weather is hot, dry and windy.

Irrigators need to be aware that the soil moisture reservoir can become depleted faster than the irrigation system can apply water, and that proper irrigation scheduling and soil moisture monitoring must begin early in the crop season.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact Sarah Sommerfeld or Lana Shaw, Provincial Irrigation Specialists, Outlook, at (306) 867-5500, or Korvin Olfert, Provincial Irrigation Specialist, Swift Current, at (306) 778-5041; or
- See the Irrigation Crop Diversification Corporation website at www.irrigationsaskatchewan.com.

IRRIGATION CROP VARIETIES FOR 2008

by Gerry Gross, PAg
Acting Manager
Irrigation Development Branch

The Canada-Saskatchewan Irrigation Diversification Centre (CSIDC) provides ongoing variety testing of field crops to ensure Saskatchewan irrigators know which varieties are the most suitable for their farms.

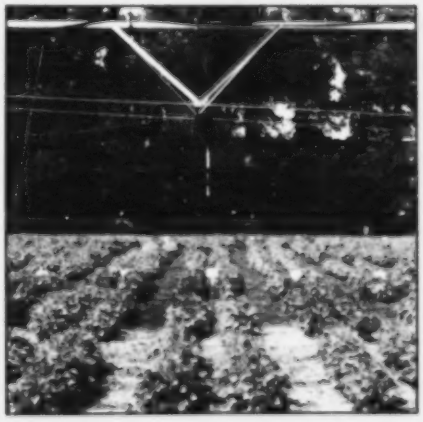
High yielding varieties are often the most in demand. Other factors, however, such as days to maturity and lodging resistance, also influence producers' decisions.

Variety development is proceeding rapidly in many field crops, as seed companies aggressively compete for market share. CSIDC attempts to place all varieties on a level "irrigation" playing field and allow irrigators to select the varieties that suit their needs.

A brief summary of the variety information available in the 2008 CSIDC publication entitled Crop Varieties for Irrigation is listed below.

Canola: The variety 45H21 is the check, changed from 46A65. Four varieties surpassed this variety in the tests, out-yielding the check by two to nine per cent. A number of the high yielding varieties are already sold out for 2008.

Flax: CDC Bethune continues to be a variety of choice under irrigation. New varieties challenging CDC Bethune are Prairie Thunder and Prairie Blue. The variety Prairie Grande will not be available for 2008.



Spring Wheat: AC Barrie remains the check variety and it continues to be a good variety for irrigation. However, it is rated against a number of other classes of spring wheat, which are perhaps more suited for irrigation.

Barley: AC Metcalfe remains the check variety and has been rated against a number of good malt and feed barleys in the test. For malt barley, it is important to stay connected to the malt industry and grow varieties that are preferred by the buyers. Both marketing considerations and irrigation evaluations should be used by the grower in variety selection.

Field Pea: Only semi-leafless varieties are recommended for irrigation because normal leaf varieties have a greater potential for disease development within the thick canopy. Cutlass is the new check variety for 2007 and it was surpassed by 15 other yellow and five green varieties.

Dry Bean: Othello remains the check variety in the wide row variety trials. CDC Pintium is the check variety of the narrow row trials. Yields and variety rankings cannot be compared between wide row and narrow row trials.

Information on fababeans, oilseed sunflowers, annual forages, alfalfa, timothy and potatoes is also included in the CSIDC publication.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

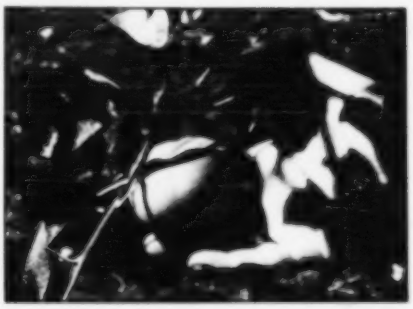
- Contact Terry Hogg of CSIDC at (306) 867-5400; or
- Contact the Irrigation Development Branch, Saskatchewan Agriculture, at (306) 867-5500; or
- See the CSIDC website at www.agr.gc.ca/AAFC-AAC/display-afficher.do?id=1186153747182&lang=e and click on the heading Publications.

Creating a prairie fruit basket

by Karen Smith, AAg
Agri-Business Analyst
Agri-Business Development Branch

The 2006 Census of Canada highlights the presence of organic fruit, vegetables and greenhouse producers in northeastern Saskatchewan.

One of these organic operations is Villageside Orchard, owned by Ken and Rhona Brinkman of Lake Lenore.



The Brinkmans launched their operation in 2000 when they planted apple trees in their backyard orchard.

They wanted to respond to growing consumer demand for healthy consumption and food traceability, so they worked closely with the University of Saskatchewan and others to determine which varieties of apple would grow best as an organic product.

The Brinkmans intend that their orchard will eventually be certified as organic. They feel this will create a unique opportunity for them in the fruit industry. Chemical-free produce is becoming more appealing to some consumers, says Rhona.

"People are beginning to question where their food comes from, and Villageside Orchard hopes to fill this need by providing quality, provincially grown produce," she said.

In 2005, the Brinkmans diversified by planting sour cherries and a small number of haskap bushes, a fruit bush also known as blue honeysuckle. This year, the Brinkmans hope to expand by planting two more acres of haskap. If they see continued demand for their products, they hope eventually to expand to a 40-acre organic orchard.

Over the years they've been in business, the Brinkmans have found it advantageous to belong to several associations that help them to gather the information they need, provide necessary contacts, and allow them to stay on top of current research. These organizations include the Saskatchewan Fruit Growers Association, Prairie Apples Inc. and Northern Lights Haskap. The Brinkmans say that membership in these associations also allows them to help others who are just starting out in the industry.

As well, the Brinkmans are involved with Saskatchewan Agriculture's Agri-Business Development staff, who introduced the concept of cluster development for the northeastern region's orchard and organic industry. The cluster development approach brings together like-minded agri-businesses that share a common interest in growth and building on regional opportunities.

Villageside Orchard and Saskatchewan Agriculture are working together to enhance a vital and growing fruit industry in the province. Saskatchewan Agriculture's agri-business specialists are located in nine regional offices around the province. Their role is to work with agri-businesses and individuals interested in building on opportunities for agriculturally based development.

The team recognizes the importance of working together to grow the local region, and is available to help agri-businesses through the development process.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact Karen Smith, Agri-Business Development Analyst, Saskatoon, at (306) 933-7231;
- Contact Agri-Business Development Specialists in Saskatchewan Agriculture's Regional Offices at Tisdale, Prince Albert, Yorkton, Swift Current, North Battleford, Outlook, Weyburn and Regina. Phone the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-3727 to be connected to any of these specialists;
- E-mail the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at agriinfo@agr.gov.sk.ca; or
- See Saskatchewan Agriculture's website at www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca.

CANADIAN PRAIRIE LAMB'S VALUE CHAIN PROJECT – A SUCCESS STORY

by Gary Coghill, PAg
Value Chain Development Specialist
Market Development and Food Branch

Looking for meal options that are quick and easy to prepare? With the trend to busier lifestyles with less time for food preparation, Canadian Prairie Lamb has responded by developing a line of lamb products that are ready to eat in minutes. "We're the first group in Canada to offer heat and serve type lamb products," says General Manager, Gord Schroeder.

Canadian Prairie Lamb is a Saskatoon-based marketing company that formed in 2001. Today, there are approximately 200 sheep producers involved in the company who are determined to produce top quality and consistent lamb products.

The company identified that, in order to grow their sheep flocks and improve their profitability, they needed to market more lambs and maximize their profit from each lamb. They decided to work with Sunterra Meats, a lamb processing facility in Alberta. They indicated that certain lamb cuts, like the chops and racks, are easy to sell, but other cuts like trim are more difficult. To improve profitability for lamb processing, Sunterra needed to sell the entire lamb. With an increase in trim sales, Sunterra could process more lambs. Canadian Prairie Lamb worked with the Saskatchewan Food Industry Development Centre to develop a line of products using lamb trim purchased from Sunterra Meats. As the sales of their products increase, the company plans to have their lamb products processed at the Saskatchewan Toll Processing Centre in Melfort.

The Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture has been a significant supporter of Canadian Prairie Lamb by providing funding to them through the Value Chain Program. They were able to use the funding to produce promotional materials, develop product packaging and establish new partners/customers. The Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture also provided support for product development through the Agri-Value Program.

One of the principles of a value chain is increased communication among the partners. Canadian Prairie Lamb has developed a working relationship with the Denbar Food Group, a distributor based in southern Ontario. The group provided feedback on the lamb products, which resulted in the development of new packaging to be more attractive to customers. As well, based on Denbar Food Group's recommendation, Canadian Prairie Lamb decided to focus on six products: Greek Style Lamb Meatballs, Parmesan Lamb Meatballs, Roasted Garlic and Pepper Lamb Sausage, Assyrian Lamb Sausage, Tunisian Cocktail Lamb Sausages, and Assyrian Cocktail Lamb Sausage.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact Gord Schroeder, General Manager, at 306-933-7166, or e-mail gordsheep@sasktel.net; or
- Contact Gary Coghill, Value Chain Development Specialist, Saskatchewan Agriculture, at 306-787-8537, or e-mail gcoghill@agr.gov.sk.ca.

EVENTS

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	PHONE	EMAIL
Various dates in March	AgriInvest and AgriStability Information Sessions	Various locations in Saskatchewan	1-866-367-8506	See the ad on page 12
Various dates in March	AgriInvest and AgriStability Individual Producer Appointments	Various locations in Saskatchewan	1-866-367-8506	See the ad on page 12
March	Rural Women's Month			www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca
Mar. 5	Grain or Grass: "Planning Today to Succeed Tomorrow"	Davidson	306-867-5575	
Mar. 6	Saskatchewan Wild Rice Industry Annual Conference	La Ronge	306-425-2283	
Mar. 10-11	Agroforestry Management Course	Saskatoon		www.saskforestcentre.ca
Mar. 10-13	SARM 103rd Annual Convention	Regina	306-761-3730	ksauer@sarm.ca
Mar. 12-13	Designer Trees: Wood Fibre for the Future	Saskatoon	306-765-2840	
Mar. 12-18	Canadian Agricultural Safety Week		306-787-5196	www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca
Mar. 13-14	Yes! to Agriculture Conference	Moose Jaw	1-866-457-2377	www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca
Mar. 16-18	CREW 2008: Canadian Renewable Energy Workshop	Regina	1-800-501-0224	lgrant@bbibiofuels.com
Mar. 25-26	Agroforestry Management Course	Biggar		www.saskforestcentre.ca
Mar. 31	Deadline to apply, reinstate, cancel or make changes to 2008 Crop Insurance contracts		306-728-7200	www.saskcropinsurance.com
Mar. 31	Deadline to apply for the Short-term Cattle Loan Program		1-877-874-5365	www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca

PROVINCE PROCLAIMS RURAL WOMEN'S MONTH IN SASKATCHEWAN

The month of March has been proclaimed as Rural Women's Month in Saskatchewan.

"This proclamation recognizes the important contributions of rural Saskatchewan women to the economic and social development of this province," Agriculture Minister Bob Bjornerud said.

"Since early homesteading days, rural women have been partners in their family farms and businesses. In addition to their dedication to the land, working off-farm jobs and raising families, rural women have also made the time to serve their communities, through involvement in churches, school and hospital boards, 4-H clubs, sports organizations, and agricultural societies," he said.

Bjornerud said the lives and accomplishments of rural women have been recorded in local history books, and by the Saskatchewan Agricultural Hall of Fame in Saskatoon. "It is appropriate that Saskatchewan celebrate the past achievements of all rural women, and acknowledge their continued contributions," Minister Bjornerud said.

Rural Women's Month will be observed in conjunction with events held in March by various women's groups in communities across the province. Some of these events are organized in association with the United Nation's International Women's Day (IWD) on March 8.

2008 AGRICULTURAL SAFETY WEEK: MARCH 12 TO 18

Sprains and strains are Canada's leading type of farm-related injury. Overexertion was the leading cause of injury, followed by livestock handling - particularly beef - then machine-related overexertion common to field crop farms and market gardens, and falls, according to a study by the Canadian Agricultural Injury Surveillance Program.

That's why "Manage more than just your back!" is the theme of this year's Canadian Agricultural Safety campaign, which aims to encourage farmers to think through their work and find ways to reduce the risk of sprains, strains and falls. The campaign is delivered by the Canadian Federation of Agriculture and Canadian Agricultural Safety Association in partnership with Farm Credit Canada and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

The Government has proclaimed March 12 to 18 as Agricultural Safety Week in Saskatchewan, supported by numerous agricultural organizations, including: the Saskatchewan Safety Council; the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan; the Farmers with Disabilities Program of the Saskatchewan Abilities Council; Safe Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan Alliance for Safety and Health in Agriculture; the Saskatchewan Farm Safety Program of Saskatchewan Advanced Education, Employment and Labour; and the Farm Stress Line of Saskatchewan Agriculture.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Visit www.casa-acsa.ca or www.cfa-fca.ca.